

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (Currently amended). A method for attenuating the virulence of ~~a bacterial pathogen~~ Staphylococcus aureus or for inhibiting or reducing colonization by ~~a bacterial pathogen~~ Staphylococcus aureus in a patient in need thereof, comprising administering to the patient in need an effective amount of c-di-GMP, ~~or a cyclic dinucleotide with the nucleotides in a head-to-tail arrangement,~~ to attenuate the virulence of, or to inhibit or reduce colonization by, ~~the bacterial pathogen~~ S. aureus.

2 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the attenuation of the virulence of ~~a bacterial pathogen~~ S. aureus comprises treating a S. aureus ~~a bacterial~~ infection.

Claim 3 (Cancelled).

4 (Currently amended). The method of claim 2, wherein said S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ infection is mastitis, ~~a Staphylococcus~~ S. aureus infection of the mammary gland.

5 (Currently amended). The method of claim 2, wherein said S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ infection is treated by inhibiting S. aureus ~~microbial~~ biofilm formation or by reducing the S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ biofilm already formed.

Claims 6-9 (Cancelled).

10 (Currently amended). The method of claim 5, wherein said S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ biofilm is on the skin or on a nasal or mucosal surface.

11 (Currently amended). The method of claim 2, further comprising administering an antibiotic compound which is effective in treating said S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ infection.

Claim 12 (Cancelled).

13 (Currently amended). The method of claim 1, wherein the inhibition or reduction of colonization of a ~~bacterial pathogen~~ S. aureus comprises treating a patient at risk of being colonized by a S. aureus ~~bacterial pathogen~~ or a patient already colonized by S. aureus ~~bacterial pathogen~~.

14 (Currently amended). The method of claim 13, wherein the colonization of a ~~bacterial pathogen~~ S. aureus that is inhibited or reduced is on the skin or on a nasal or mucosal surface.

Claim 15 (Cancelled).

16 (Original). The method of claim 13, wherein said patient is a carrier of *Staphylococcus aureus*.

17 (Currently amended). A method for inhibiting ~~bacterial~~ Staphylococcus aureus colonization and biofilm formation or for reducing colonization and pre-formed Staphylococcus aureus ~~bacterial~~ biofilm on a solid surface,

comprising exposing the solid surface to an effective amount of c-di-GMP ~~or a cyclic dinucleotide~~ to inhibit ~~bacterial~~ S. aureus colonization and biofilm formation or to reduce S. aureus ~~bacterial~~ colonization and pre-formed biofilm on said solid surface.

18(Original). The method of claim 17, wherein said solid surface is a solid surface of a medical device.

19(Original). The method of claim 18, wherein said medical device is implantable in or capable of attaching to a patient.

20(Original). The method of claim 18, wherein said medical device is implanted in a patient or otherwise in contact with a patient.

Claims 21-27 (Cancelled).

28(Previously presented). The method of claim 1, wherein said patient in need thereof is a mammal.

29(Previously presented). The method of claim 1, wherein said patient in need thereof is human.

30(Previously presented). The method of claim 1, wherein said patient in need thereof is a bird.